

Remarks at a White House Victory Celebration November 6, 1996

Thank you very much. Thank you. Well, you know, I really appreciate that lesson in history from the Vice President. *[Laughter]* I'll tell you one thing—you remember what John Nance Garner said about the Vice Presidency; he said it wasn't worth a warm—what—kettle of spit, or something like that. *[Laughter]* That's before Al Gore got ahold of it. Nobody will ever say that again—ever, ever, ever say that again.

And just for your information, George Clinton of New York, doubtless a relative of mine—*[laughter]*—the only man in America ever to be the Governor of a State in excess of 20 years—he served for 21 years as Governor of New York. He served 4 years and then laid out and served 17 years, until he became Vice President. And that's a pretty good record. *[Laughter]* It just sort of runs in the family, you know. *[Laughter]*

I want to tell you all—first to the White House staff and to all the appointees who are here; to the members of the Clinton/Gore campaign, from our wonderful campaign manager, Peter Knight, on down; and to the members of—the people who work for our Democratic Party campaign. I want to say a special word of thanks to Don Fowler and Chris Dodd; they did a wonderful job, all the people at the party. To our terrific Cabinet over here on the left—you know, they've labored for 4 years to uphold the dignity of our Government, and they sort of changed their image today. *[Laughter]* That picture of Warren Christopher in that T-shirt gets out—*[laughter]*—he'll be on Letterman and Leno within 48 hours. I thank you all so much.

Last night I had a chance to do something really quite wonderful for me. I was able to have a meeting with—when I was home in Arkansas—with everybody who ever worked for me there—at least we invited them all—the people who worked for me 20 years ago when I was attorney general, the people who worked for me during all my five terms as Governor. And I told them something I want to tell you; that is, I have always been a very hard-working, kind of hard-driving person. I'm always focused on the matter before me. Sometimes I don't say thank you enough. And I've always been kind hard on myself, and sometimes I think

just by omission I'm too hard on the people who work here.

You have accomplished a phenomenal amount in the last 4 years, and you have proved that even in this vast country of ours, where the Government is only one part of our national partnership and billions upon billions of decisions are made every day by people who are not in our Government—thank goodness we are primarily a country of free individuals with a free enterprise system—but you have proved again something that was clearly in doubt in 1992 at election time. You have proved that with disciplined, sustained, focused effort, America can be changed for the better.

You have proved that our problems are not all intractable. You have proved that we can galvanize the energies of the American people and that we can, in fact, bring the deficit down—it's not a permanent feature of American life; we can, in fact, grow the economy on a sustained basis; we can, in fact, improve the education and the educational opportunities of our children; we can, in fact, lower the crime rate; and in fact, if people will help us enough in communities across the country, we can even help to change some of the very difficult cultural patterns that had begun to develop in our country over the last several years. You all did that.

Very often, I get the credit for the work you do, and then when something goes haywire, if I make a mistake, you have to try to figure out how to clean it up. *[Laughter]* And I appreciate that. *[Laughter]* And I'm sure I'll give you other opportunities in the year ahead. *[Laughter]*

I just want you to know, all of you, from the Cabinet to the staff, to the appointees, to all the others who are here, you should be very proud of this. This race was won because of the record we made and because of the plans we have and because we have established in the minds of the American people that it's more than talk with us, that we work at it hard every day. All of us, we work hard. And in the end that's what sustained us: a vision, a strategy, hard work, and success. And we have a lot more work to do. But when our work is done and when there is 8 years of sustained, disciplined

effort, we will have gone a long way toward preparing our country for this new century.

I can't even imagine what the world is going to be like, but I try to imagine it all the time, 20 or 30 or 40 years from now. And we are lucky enough to just be here at a moment in history when it is our profound obligation to move the American people closer to what they believe by opening up new opportunities for people to live out their dreams, and when we have the opportunity to prove that we can actually reduce our problems. We have to keep working on that.

We've got a lot to do. I talked a little about it last night. But I begin this new tenure with high opportunity and with renewed energy and with profound gratitude to the American people and to all of you. Two years ago, not many

people thought we would be here. But I believed if we just kept doing the right things, kept trying to do them in the right way, and kept working hard and refused to be distracted by the things which dominate too much of our public life today, in the end the American people would render the right judgment.

I am profoundly grateful for what they did last night and very, very grateful to all of you for making it possible.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:25 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Donald L. Fowler, national chairman, and Senator Christopher J. Dodd, general chairman, Democratic National Committee.

Remarks at a Victory Celebration at the National Building Museum *November 6, 1996*

Thank you. Let me join Tipper and Hillary and Al in telling you how glad I am to see all of you. I'm sorry we couldn't get everybody into the limited hotel space in Little Rock. Although, somehow or another, we had about 50,000 people in the street.

It's been a wonderful day. And I am full of gratitude to all of you and to all those whom you represent. I thank my Cabinet; I know that at least Secretaries Riley, O'Leary, and Brown are here. But all of them worked very, very hard. I thank Don Fowler. And along with Hillary and Tipper and Al and all of you, I send our prayers and best wishes to Don and his wife tomorrow. And I thank Chris Dodd for speaking out in his brave and aggressive and incredibly articulate way. And we did pretty well in Connecticut last night. I think that the people there agreed with him instead of all those that were attacking us and running us down.

I thank Marvin Rosen for taking on this hard job and doing it well and Peter Knight and all of our wonderful campaign staff and Richard Sullivan all the people at the DNC. I thank Terry McAuliffe and Laura Hartigan; they worked so hard with all of their people to make sure our campaign was financed early and well.

I want to thank those who entertained us tonight, and thank all of you. There are a lot of people in this audience and around this country who played a major role in this campaign.

I feel I have to say a special word of thanks to the mayors that are here. I know that Dennis Archer and also Mayor Ed Rendell of Philadelphia are here. I don't know if there are any other mayors, but if there are mayors or Governors here I don't know about, I thank you very much for what you've done. Thank you, Reverend Jesse Jackson, for what you did in this campaign and what you do in every campaign, all the miles you traveled, all the speeches you gave. Thank you for going to California and standing up, as I did, for what we believe. We don't always win when we stand up for what we believe, but we always come out ahead. And I thank you, sir, for that.

Let me say that a campaign is a fascinating thing—the people who give and give and give of their time, their money, their heart. This was an unusual campaign for me, in terms of the difference from the one before, because this time, everywhere I went I could actually see the evidence of our collective endeavors.

I was in Denver the other night and we had a nice little crowd and then folks were standing